cent request to some seventy American colleges and universities to submit to its investigators a list of "textbooks and supplementary reading, together with authors . . . in the fields of sociology, geography, economics, government, philosophy, history, political science, and American literature." Writes Mr. De Voto:

"They (the universities) have got to stop the government short right now, that is, if they are not to become bondservants of Congress or in fact of any single Congressman who can swing a majority in the Committee on Rules, Appropriations, Ways and Means, or Un-American Activities. If they abandon as much as one book to Mr. Wood they may as well throw in their hand. They will defy any government control of inquiry whatsoever, or they will be forced to submit to any political dictation, any limitation of academic freedom, and any coercion of academic procedure as a committee majority may care or may be induced to impose. There is no such thing as a partial virgin. There is no such thing as academic freedom that is just a mite restricted. The colleges are entirely free or they are not free at all."

Mr. De Voto's conclusion that one must "defy" the committee or yield to it entirely is correct and inescapable. Such defiance is as important in the sciences and the arts—including motion pictures—as it is in education, since all are concerned with the dissemination of ideas; since all partake, in one degree or another, of the nature of "inquiry."

It was a consideration of just such matters as Mr. De Voto has dealt with which determined the stand of those motion picture writers, directors and producers who were subpoenaed by the Committee on Un-American Activities in October of 1947, to appear as "unfriendly witnesses" in an investigation "to determine the extent of Communist infiltration in the Hollywood motion picture industry."

After the hearings were completed, the unfriendly witnesses, finding it impossible to state their case as news, were obliged to resort to a series of paid advertisements, one of which appeared on November 13, 1947. In this rather expensive variation of a free press, they explained their conduct before the committee in the following words:

"Acceptance of the perverted standards of the committee can result only in creative paralysis, timid ideas and poorer films. Surrender to the committee in any single detail is merely a prelude to total surrender."

It was their action upon this attitude which precipitated the Hollywood blacklist, the contempt of Congress indictments, and the subsequent trials and appeals. The unfriendly witnesses didn't believe there was such a thing as "a partial virgin." They didn't accept the possibility of a free screen that "is just a mite restricted."

* * *

Ranking Republican member of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, and in 1947 its chairman, is Mr. J. Parnell Thomas, a New Jersey politician presently under indictment by a Federal Grand Jury for stealing government funds. Mr. Thomas, as a committee fledgling in 1938, became a qualified expert on literary matters by asking a witness "which WPA payroll is Christopher Marlowe on, New York or Chicago?"

The committee's ranking Democrat then and now is Mr. John E. Rankin, who represents the interests of a minority of some five percent of the disenfranchised inhabitants of Mississippi. He is a man who has used the words "kike," "Jew-boy," and "nigger" in open debate on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Members of the committee who appeared from time to time at the Hollywood hearings were Mr. John McDowell of Pennsylvania, since defeated for reelection; Mr. Richard B. Vail of Illinois, since defeated for reelection; Mr. John S. Wood of Georgia, who is the present chairman of the committee and author of its demands for college and university text-book litsts; and Mr. Richard M. Nixon of California.

The hearings were held in the Old House Office Building before some eighty representatives of the American and foreign press. They were recorded and broadcast by every major radio network and by innumerable independent stations. They were reported in every capital of the world. A battery of eleven newsreel cameras covered the event for motion picture audiences.

Witnesses were divided into two groups, labeled by Mr. Thomas "friendly" to the committee and "unfriendly." The friendly witnesses were again divided into writers and actors who came principally to accuse; and producers and labor executives who appeared to defend their special interests in the matter at issue.

It would be difficult to imagine more eloquent assertions of loyalty than those made before the committee by the subpoenaed producers: "I feel very proud to be an American. I spent three-odd months in Europe, and I saw the consequence of people who killed laws, who destroyed freedom of enterprise, individual enterprise, private enterprise . . . I . . . naturally am in favor of anything that is good for all Americans . . . I am for everything you have said . . . it was the statement of a real American, and I am proud of it. . . . I don't think we should be too tense on this. Being too tense,

I think you end up without any tense. . . . I find these people have not attacked the government with violence and overthrowing. . . . We will certainly continue, as long as we are in the motion picture industry, to aid this great country of the United States with every ounce of energy we possess . . . I had nothing to do with Russia in 1944. I want no part of it. . . . We rely on a deep-rooted, pervading respect for our country's principles. . . . I can't, for the life of me, figure where men could get together and try in any form, shape, or manner to deprive a man of a livelihood because of his political beliefs."

Or: "I have abundant reason to cherish the blessings of our democracy . . . If they should find anything detrimental to the American Government or the Congress I would never allow anything against anybody in our government or in our Congress, I would never allow them to have a laugh at such a serious price . . . I have got to confess that was the only time in my life that I gave money to Russia, and if I were to be told that two years ago, God help the one that asked for it. But when they made the plea that we must go out and help Russia, I felt I would rather they kill Russians than kill Americans and I gave them money. I made the picture in the same spirit . . . I am convinced of that. I am under oath, and if I met my God I would still repeat the same thing."

One there was among the producers—a man of higher intellect and morality than those with whom he had been cast—who declared to the committee: "I can tell you personally what I feel. Up until the time it is proved that a Communist is a man dedicated to the overthrow of the Government by force or violence, or by any illegal methods, I cannot make any determination of his employment on any other basis except whether he is qualified best to do the job I want him to do."

Yet it was this man, upon his return to Hollywood, who accepted the chairmanship of the producer committee to enforce the blacklist. Asked by a New Yorker reporter why he had changed his mind, he replied with stark simplicity that he had done it to hold his job. Such is the flavor of toad-meat on the tongue of an aspiring man.

The writers who appeared as friendly, or complaining, witnesses, were of a different stripe. Throughout their testimony ran the plaintive wonder of men who somehow have been passed by in the race for whatever rewards Hollywood may offer: ". . . it is very easy for him (the story editor) to load the (employment) list with Communists . . . (the reader) prepares a very bad synopsis of all material submitted by people who are not Communists . . . I know anti-Communist writers in Hollywood who have been forced practically to starvation by the refusal of the Communist writers to work for them . . . Those members of the Story Analysts Guild (readers) who are sympathetic to or followers of the Communist Party, are in a

position to promote, all things being equal, one submitted piece of material coming from people sympathetic to their cause, and to suppress material coming from anybody unsympathetic to their cause . . . I wrote a story. They were scared off, and never did the picture . . . Hollywood writers . . . have been scared . . . intimidated . . . I was very much in need of money. I have a wife and two children. A job was very precious to me. I sold a producer at Paramount an idea for a story that I had and he hired me and to my joy assigned me to work with ——— . . . But I soon discovered that his (———'s) love of mankind did not extend to me . . . I think they should be silenced, deported, or treated as the spys and agents they are. I am the utmost believer in tolerance there ever was, but . . ."

Here the motive is clear. These witnesses had enjoyed indifferent success in the sale of their literary creations to the screen, and their employment records were spotty. They wanted the jobs held by the men they accused of being Communists, and they forthrightly solicited the aid of the committee in eliminating competition. Despicable, perhaps, or not, as one may view such matters; but certainly not devious, nor beyond the comprehension of reasonable men.

The actors, successful artists all and therefore without private axes to grind, appeared to speak from the deepest wellsprings of patriotism. True, their testimony was prepared by others and carefully rehearsed in advance with Mr. Robert Stripling, committee investigator. But they were eager participants in the show, and their performances seemed to reflect a solemn conviction that their accused fellow-workers were so actively engaged in revolutionary foment their their violent overthrow of the government constituted an imminent peril. Possessed of such convictions—if, indeed, they were convictions—no man may be condemned for voicing them, although the choice of tribunal in this instance may not have been well considered.

By far the most complex of all the friendly witnesses were the two labor executives who, professing widely differing points of view, nonetheless revealed striking similarities as their testimony unfolded. In contrast to the feelings of most men who are invited to participate in such a display, both of them professed their eagerness to testify. "I welcome the opportunity," said the international representative of the I.A.T.S.E. "I would be here, whether you gave me a subpoena or not," said the president of the Screen Writers Guild.

Both men, leaders of labor and presumably aware of those acts of Congress which for thirteen years have barred compulsory reve-

lation of trade union membership, appeared zealous to discard such immunities, not only for themselves but for other trade unionists as well. "I see no reason at all why today a man should deny his membership in an American trade union—none at all," said the trade union leader. "I wanted to volunteer the information that I am both a member and serving my third term as president," said the Guild executive, adding that he was "delighted and proud" to do so. Neither man appeared willing to pay even lip service to a tradition of secrecy, the destruction of which, to Negro trade unionists and organizers in the South, often brings swift and violent death.

Still another similarity between the two stood forth in the revelation that each was appearing before the committee for the avowed purpose of winning a union fight in which he was engaged. The I.A.T.S.E. unions at the moment were violating the picket-lines and taking over the struck jobs of painters, carpenters and story analysts, all of whom the trade union witness accused of being Communists and hence fair game. "We hope," he said, "that with the help of the committee, the Communist menace in the motion picture industry may be successfully destroyed, to the end that Hollywood labor may be spared in the future the strife and turmoil of the immediate past."

The president of the Screen Writers Guild also had a union problem. Elections were shortly scheduled in his guild, and some of the candidates for directorships were those same unfriendly witnesses the committee was indicting for contempt of Congress. The guild executive had himself three times been elected president of the guild with the support of the unfriendly writers. He had also run for Congress in 1946, and had solicited their names as sponsors of his candidacy, used their homes for election speeches, and readily accepted their financial contributions to his campaign chest. But he was presently involved in a coalition with the complaining writers who had already testified, in an effort to defeat his former sponsors in their guild candidacies.

Lest his appearance be misinterpreted as a moral stand against the committee's investigation, he made his position perfectly clear. "My only concern with respect to this whole proceeding, Mr. Chairman," he declared, "is merely that people might go back home and think that they have been political martyrs. An election in November which is coming up in our Screen Writers Guild might be seriously affected, and not for the better, if people thought that perhaps government had interfered any more than was necessary in the normal operations of the guild."

How much government interference he felt "was necessary" in the guild he otherwhere revealed by stating that he had "appeared

before the FBI voluntarily and had offered to put myself and any records of our guild completely at his disposal at any time." This generous act, performed without consent either of board or membership, established his respect for the privacy of union business: he believed in the principle of the "partial virgin" and had succeeded in making one out of his own bargaining organization.

To Mr. Archibald MacLeish's query, addressed to the nation during the committee hearings—"The question before the country is—can a Committee of Congress do indirectly by inquisition into a man's beliefs, what the Constitution forbids Congress to do directly: And if it can, what is left of the Constitution and the freedom it protects?"—the guild president paid no heed. He was not concerned with the issue raised by Mr. MacLeish: he was impetuous in his desire to answer questions the committee had not even propounded to him: he was willing to forego any obligation to "the Constitution and the freedom it protects."

"I have a piece of information that I would like to put in the record on my own motion," he said to the committee, "and on my own volunteering, because I am not sure as a student of constitutional law whether the committee does have the authority to demand it of me, but let me break the suspense immediately and tell you that I am not a Communist." He then proceeded to tell the committee what he was.

As the two labor representatives were dismissed, Mr. McDowell thanked them for their cooperation. "You have been a good witness," he informed the union leader. And to the guild executive he said: "It is a great relief to have you testify, to hear you testify . . . without waving your arms and screaming and insisting that something was being done to you—about the Bill of Rights. It is good to hear somebody from the Screen Writers Guild talk as freely as you have."

Clearly the urgency to defy the committee or to condemn its activities was not strongly upon these men. In the full flux of the Toad, voluntarily and without any compulsion, they surrendered two vital constitutional outposts. Their capitulation served not only to repudiate those witnesses who had refused to bow before the committee; it actually provided the committee with righteous ammunition for the waging of its future campaigns against trade unions, atomic science and—as Mr. De Voto has pointed out with such justifiable concern—academic freedom itself.

Only one other position—aside from that of the unfriendly witnesses—remains to be dealt with: that of Mr. Eric Johnston,